



# ***FOOTBALL CONDITIONING***

## ***Periodising Training***

### ***6 Week Cycles***

ADVANCED COACHING COURSES | STATE COACHING CONFERENCE

- To introduce the concept that the most appropriate way to train football is to leave the total football structure as much as possible intact.
- To understand how to incorporate Football Conditioning into 6-week Technical/Tactical cycles

# Vision and Philosophy

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graph TD; VP[Vision and Philosophy] --- T[Training]; VP --- M[The Match]; VP --- Man[Management]; T --- FK[Football Knowledge]; M --- FK; Man --- FK
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Training

The Match

Management

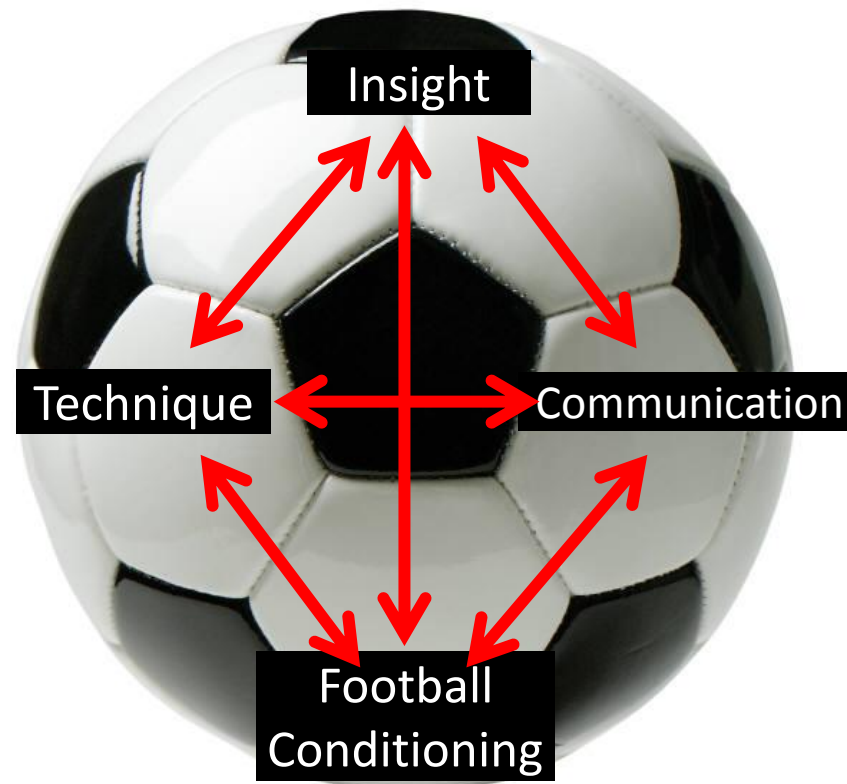
Football Knowledge

# Jose Mourinho

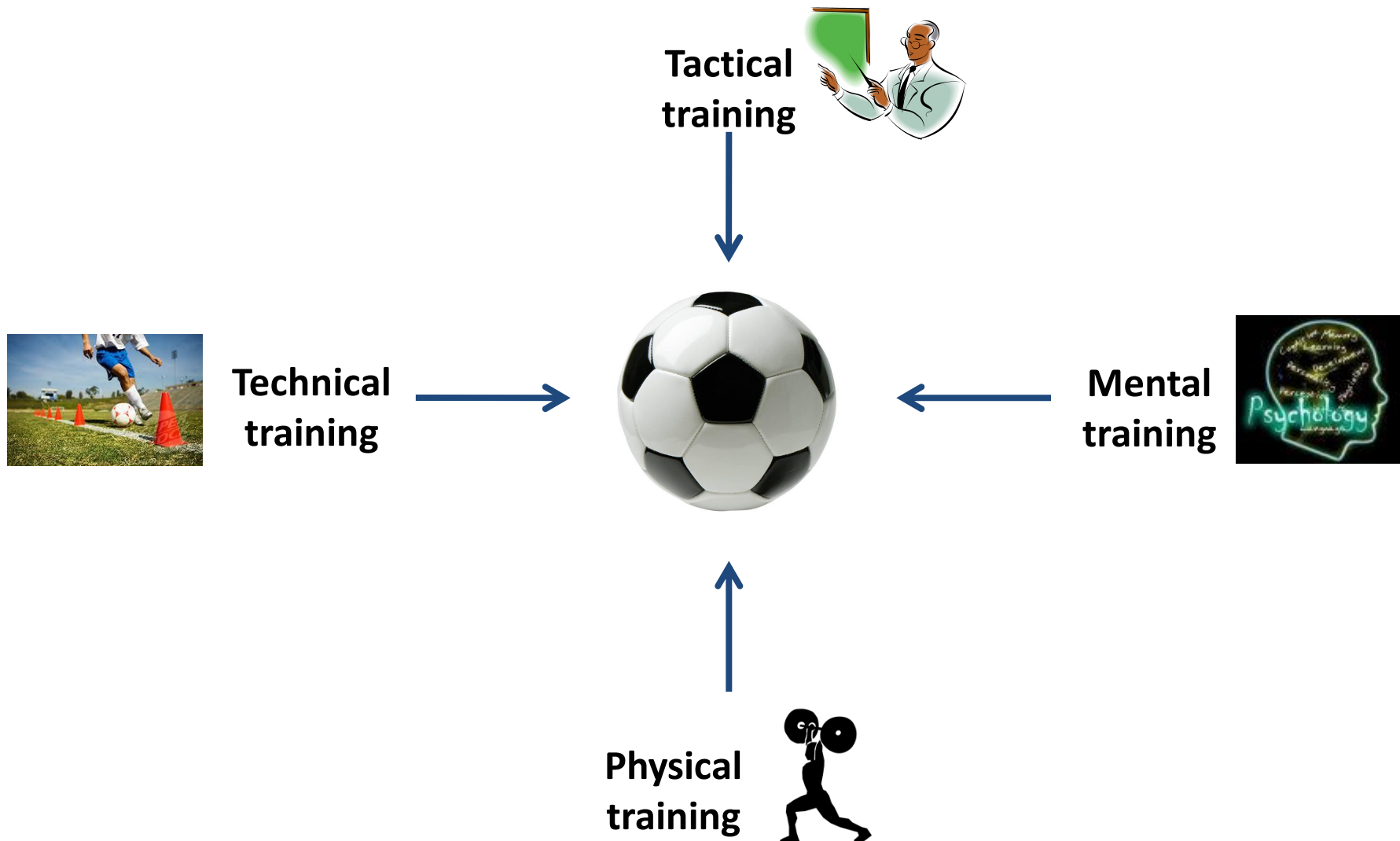


“....at a certain moment faced with a certain situation all of the players think in the same way...”

# FOOTBALL TRAINING IS



# Not this...



The purpose of Training is to improve

## **MATCH PERFORMANCE:**

Training activities must therefore be

**football-related activities that  
resemble the Match** and prepare  
players for the Match

If the **whole of a training session** is aimed at achieving the objective, more chance of learning/success



Make **better use of every minute** of  
the session to make it more  
successful

**Do not waste valuable football training time with non-relevant activities**

Your team needs to be better at  
playing football during the MATCH?

# Consider how your team:-

Attacks

Defends

Transitions

The qualities of your players?

What do you do in training to bring  
this to life?

Do you have a plan?

Do you know what you will do throughout the season?

Do you know what you will do for every  
6 weeks throughout the season?



Do you know what you will do for each week for every 6 week (block) throughout the session?

Do you know what you will do for every day for each week for every 6 week (block) throughout the session?

## **Where to start?**

### **Pre - Season**

### **The First 6 WEEKS**

# Pre-season Planning



What do you focus on during Pre season?

...?

- Fitness?
- Football?

Chance to get the players fit?

What type of fitness work do you do?

- The general perception in Australia is that fitness is THE decisive factor in football
- Therefore conditioning has become almost a national obsession, even in youth football

Strength and Conditioning specialists from other sports have taken over a major part of football training and make us believe football fitness is almost rocket science



In Rugby/AFL the physical component is probably decisive.

In football the most skilful players decide the games.

# Conditioning in Football



FIFA provide physical data for every team at the 2010 World Cup.

How much fitter do you think the top four were....

SPAIN
HOLLAND
GERMANY
URUGUAY

...than...

...four teams who were eliminated in the Group Stage?

ALGERIA
SLOVENIA
DPR KOREA
AUSTRALIA

Country	Highest Distance Covered	LOW INTENSITY % (team average)	MED INTENSITY % (team average)	HIGH INTENSITY % (team average)
ALGERIA	11400	81.4	9.2	9.4
SLOVENIA	11300	82.5	9	8.5
DPR KOREA	11800	81.6	9.2	9
AUSTRALIA	<b>12400</b>	75.5	11	<b>13.5</b>
SPAIN	11300	81.7	8.8	9.5
HOLLAND	10800	83.7	7.7	8.6
GERMANY	10800	82	8.8	9.2
URUGUAY	11000	82.1	8.5	9.5

The scores of the top four are not  
any better than those of teams  
that were eliminated during the  
group stage

Fitness is apparently  
not where you find  
Spain's superiority

It's not about how far you run or  
how fast you run:  
it's about where you run, when you  
run and what you do when you get  
there!

This is determined by how your  
team plays

How does your team play?



Remember when you considered  
how your team played! In your  
'minds eye' what did you see?

What style of play?

How do you attack / defend?

What type of players do you like?

What does FIFA's **technical**  
data  
from the 2010 World Cup  
tell us about the top 3  
Nations?

# Germany (3<sup>rd</sup>)



- **Patient build-up play from the back through the midfield**
- **Excellent passing game - good options for the player in possession**
- **Influential individual players (SCHWEINSTEIGER, OEZIL, MUELLER)**
- **Disciplined, well-organised defence**
- **Dangerous at set pieces**
- **Winning mentality**
- **Excellent team spirit**
- **Width of the pitch used well - wingers attack the goal, are able to cut in, good in 1v1 situations**
- **Rapid transition from defence to attack**
- **Effective use of full-backs**

# Holland (2nd)



- **Patient build-up play from the back through the midfield**
- **Excellent passing game**
- **Influential individual players (SNEIJDER, ROBBEN)**
- **Disciplined, well-organised defence**
- **Dangerous at set pieces**
- **Good links between the team lines**
- **Width of the pitch used well**
  - **wingers attack the goal, are able to cut in, good in 1v1 situations**
- **Winning mentality**
- **Midfield pressing**
- **Immediate pressure after losing possession**

# Spain (1st)



- **Patient build-up play from the back through the midfield**
- **Excellent passing game**
- **Influential individual players (INIESTA, XAVI, VILLA)**
- **Comfortable in possession when under pressure**
- **Winning mentality**
- **Disciplined, well-organised defence**
- **Immediate pressure after losing possession**
- **Good links between the team lines**
- **Width of the pitch used well - wingers attack the goal, are able to cut in, good in 1v1 situations**

# Compare that to Australia

# Australia (21st)



- Deep defensive block
- Attacks using the width
- Immediate pressure after losing possession
- Strong, hard-working players
- Determination

What use was all that fitness?

# Conclusion?



Your players need to be fit, of course

But everyone seems to be fit so..

What really makes a difference?



Superior technical / tactical qualities  
(**effective** possession and 'special'  
players) were the deciding factors at the  
World Cup, not physical qualities

That's just like your team –  
Right?

- When they are able to run 10 km around the athletic track or through the woods?
- When they are able to sprint 100 metres in 15 seconds?
- When they are able to do 50 push-ups or sit-ups?
- When they are doing all the gym exercises with maximum weights?
- When they score well in sprint, jump or beep tests?

# Fit for what?

Fit to do what they need to  
do, as well as they can,  
whenever it is required,  
throughout a football game

These may be the actions a player needs to perform to play football according to the your Team Model

Shooting/Passing

Making a run into space

Tracking a defender

Using a 1v1 move to get past an opponent

Jumping to win a header

Pressing the opponent with the ball

Etc., etc.

**Football Language! (not rocket science)**

Fit to do what they need to  
do, as well as they can,  
whenever it is required,  
throughout a football game

Football fitness should be developed in a  
football specific way

FOOTBALL TRAINING = CONDITIONING

CONDITIONING = FOOTBALL TRAINING

Let's start

Season Planning

Pre Season

**The first 6 Weeks**



# What do you do in Pre Season?

# Ideally...

- Focusing on the Team
- Establish Team Principles
  - How you attack and score goals
  - How you defend and prevent goals
  - How you transition
- Technical/tactical preparation above physical preparation

# forget...

- Hill runs
- Beach runs
- Commando work
- Endless laps
- Isolated drills and practices
- Non football activities

# What's the focus?



Just fitness?

Just football?

50% fitness, 50% football?

Aren't they the same thing? Don't we want Football Fitness?

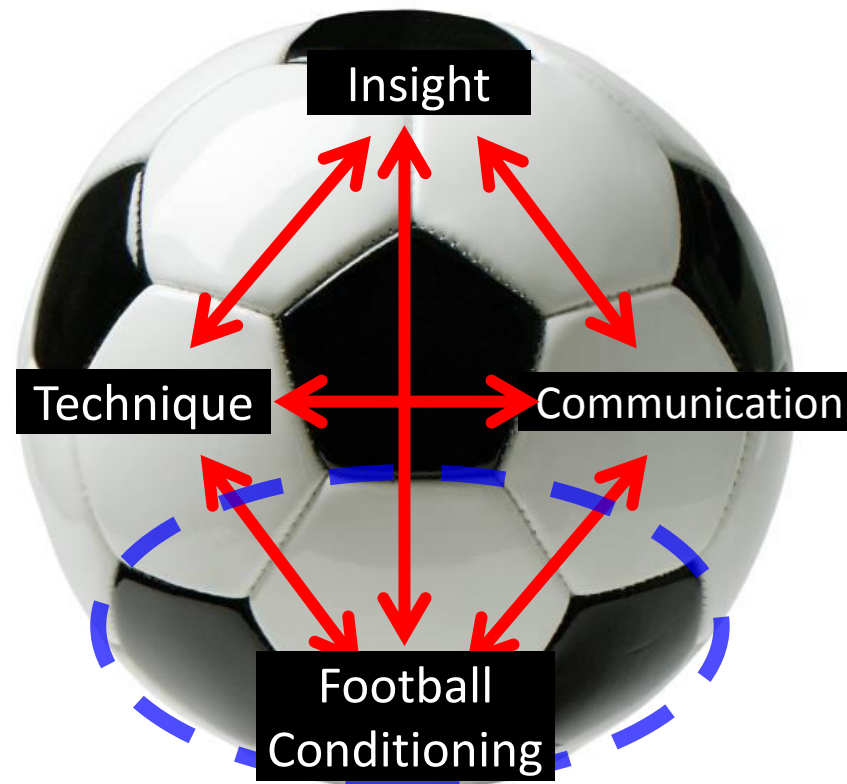
FOOTBALL TRAINING = CONDITIONING

CONDITIONING = FOOTBALL TRAINING

All conditioning exercises are

**game-specific**

# The Performance Phase



for players who have **NOT** gone through  
the 'Growth Spurt' there's **NO** need to  
worry about **Football Conditioning**

How do you develop Football  
Conditioning by playing football?



# Play Football!

Big and Medium Games =  
Maintain Quicker Recovery

Small Games = Quicker Recovery

Big Games =  
Maintain Quicker Recovery

# Traditional v Football Conditioning

Distance runs – Coopers test  
= Big Games

# Traditional v Football Conditioning

Steady state running v  
Continual change of  
pace/direction

Athletics v Football

# Maintain quick recovery



## Big Games

8, 9, 10 or 11 a side:

- $\frac{3}{4}$  - full pitch (dependant on numbers)

Start with –

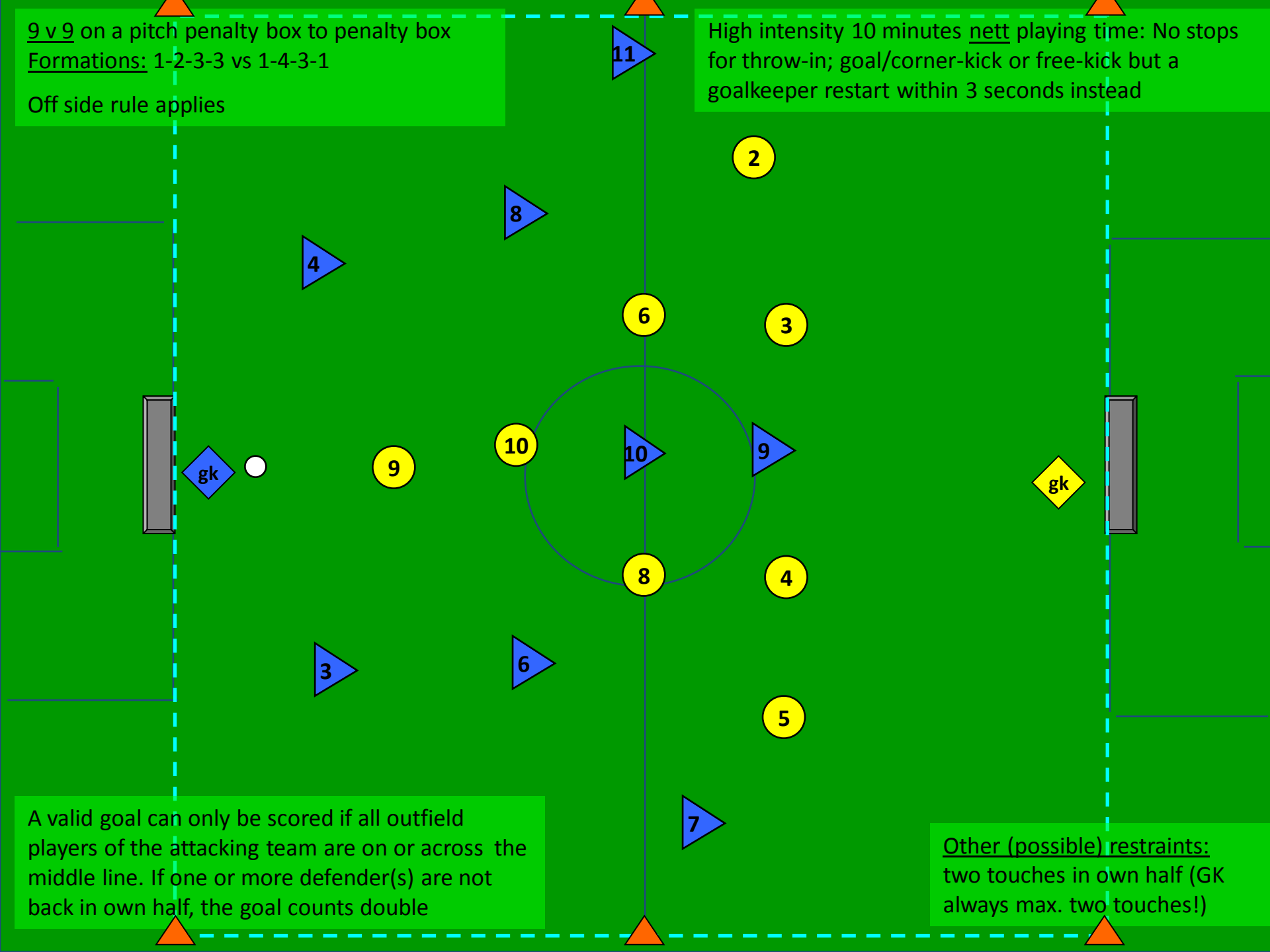
Start with - Play 10 minutes with 2 minutes rest  
2 repetitions

9 v 9 on a pitch penalty box to penalty box

Formations: 1-2-3-3 vs 1-4-3-1

Off side rule applies

High intensity 10 minutes nett playing time: No stops for throw-in; goal/corner-kick or free-kick but a goalkeeper restart within 3 seconds instead



A valid goal can only be scored if all outfield players of the attacking team are on or across the middle line. If one or more defender(s) are not back in own half, the goal counts double

Other (possible) restraints:  
two touches in own half (GK always max. two touches!)

Medium Games =  
Maintain Quicker Recovery

# Traditional v Football Conditioning

Tempo runs (Increase and  
demands e.g. 200m/400m/800m)  
= Medium Games

## Athletics V Football



# Maintain quick recovery



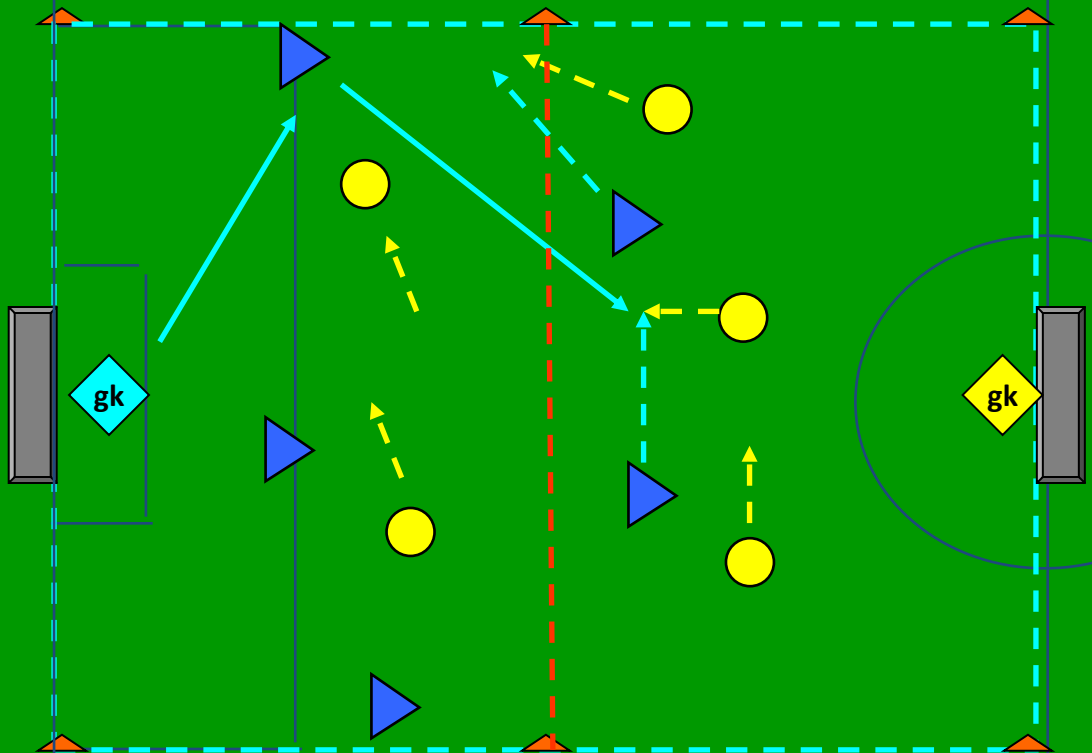
## Medium Games

5, 6 or 7 a side

- $\frac{1}{4}$  - half pitch (dependant on numbers)

Start with - Play 4 minutes with 2 minutes rest  
4 repetitions

## 6 v 6 (incl. GK)



*6 v 6 on a 50:40 m. field.*

*Game development: 6 v 6, team in possession tries to score (goalkeeper: 1 or 2 touch only).*

*High intensity 4 minutes nett playing time*

*No stops for throw-ins; corner-kicks; etc.  
goalkeeper to restart play within 3 seconds,  
otherwise possession goes to the opponent*

*After 4 minutes the players have 2 minutes rest  
(possibly change of opponent: 4 teams playing  
on 2 pitches)*

*Game intention BP: positioning (formation 1-3-2); passing; 1<sup>st</sup> touch; shooting / finishing;  
handling-speed; decision making; anticipation*

*BPO: pressing / defending as a unit;  
communication; insight (cutting lines to goals &  
opponents etc.)*

*Structured defending is only possible when the  
off-side rule applies!*

# Small Games = Quicker Recovery

# Traditional v Football Conditioning

Doggies/Shuttle runs  
= Small Games

# Recover more quickly



## Small Games

3 v 3 – 4 v 4 (including goal keepers)

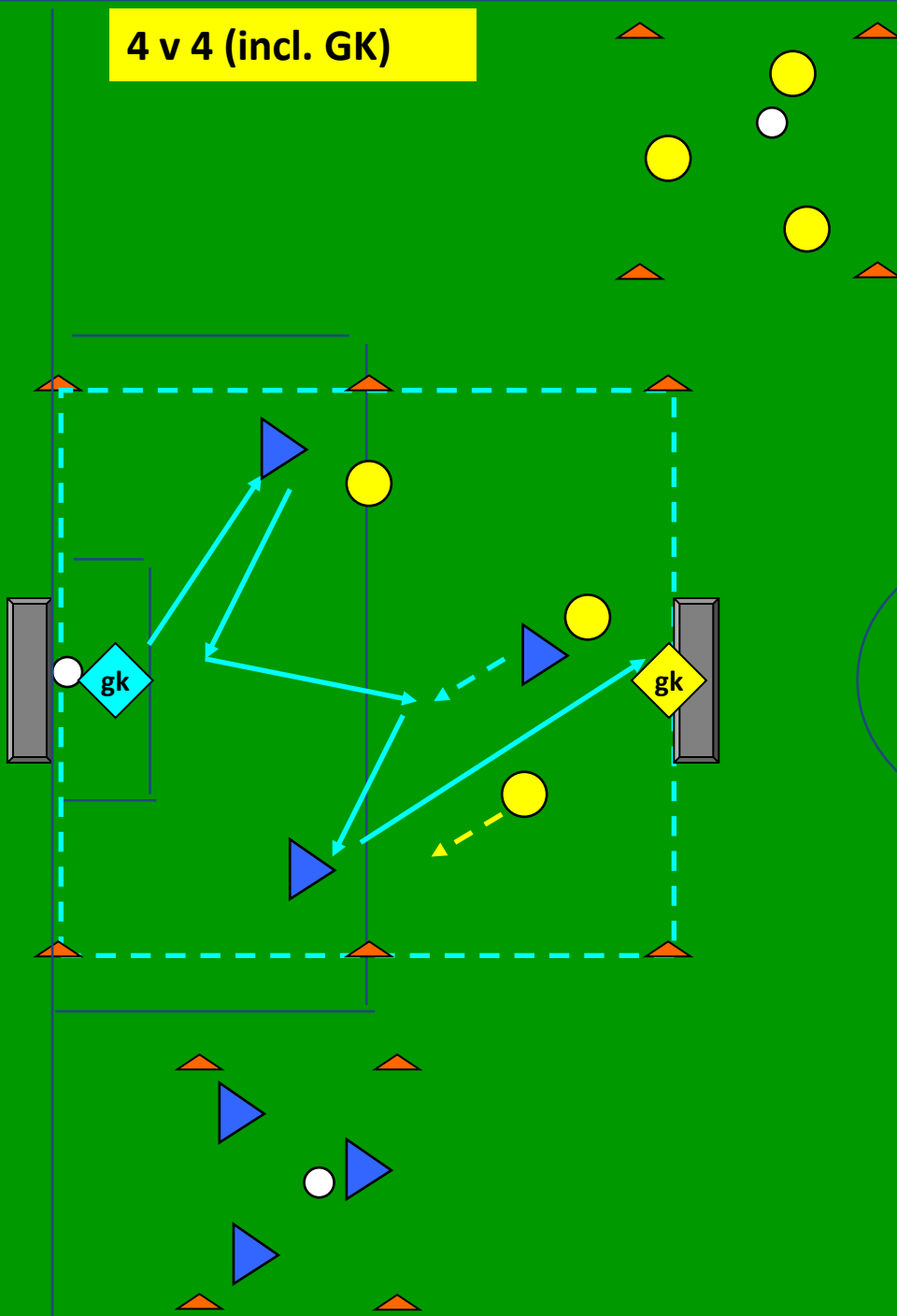
30x20 – 40x30 m. pitch

Start with - Play 1 minute with 3 minutes rest

6 repetitions per series

2 series with 4 minutes rest in between.

## 4 v 4 (incl. GK)



*4 v 4 on a 40:30 m. field.*

*Game development: 4 v 4, team in possession tries to score (goalkeeper: 1 touch only).*

*High intensity 1 minute nett playing time*

*No stops for throw-ins; corner-kicks; etc. goalkeeper to restart play within 3 seconds, otherwise possession goes to the opponent*

*After 1 minute the outfield players change with 2 new teams and have a 3 minutes 'active' rest (juggling; positioning or foot-volley game in a grid next to the playing area)*

*Game intention BP: positioning (1:2:1 formation); passing; 1<sup>st</sup> touch; shooting / finishing; handling-speed; decision making; anticipation*

*BPO: pressing / defending as a unit; communication; insight (cutting lines to goals & opponents)*

# FOOTBALL'S AN ENDURANCE SPORT?

Football demands the ability to  
run at a variety of speeds, to  
accelerate, decelerate, change  
direction throughout the  
Match



You have 6 weeks until your  
first game.

How do you want your  
team to play in that game?

Will you be ready for the  
first game after a traditional  
pre season?

By the first game



My team knows how to

Attack

Defend

Transition

I've worked with my players  
and have them All available

# Pre-season Planning



Put it in a Plan

# 6 week pre season amateur – Cycle 1



	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Monday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Tuesday	BP	BPO - BP	BPO	BP	BP	BPO
Wednesday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Thursday	BP - BPO	BP	BPO - BP	BP - BPO	BPO	BP
Friday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Saturday	BPO	BP - BPO	Internal Training game 45 minutes	<b>Trial Game</b>	<b>Trial Game</b>	<b>Trial Game</b>
Sunday	???	???	???	???	???	???

Working on how  
my team plays

## What about football fitness?

## What goes?



Nothing?

Team sessions with a  
Tactical/Technical focus

or

Team sessions with a Football  
conditioning focus

# 6 week pre season amateur – Cycle 1



	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Monday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Tuesday	FC /BP	FC/BPO - BP	FC/BP C	FC/BP	FC/BP	FC BPO
Wednesday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Thursday	TT/ BP - BPO	TT/BP	TT/BPO - BP	TT/BP BPO	TT/BP O	TT/BP
Friday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Saturday	TT/BP O	TT/BP - BPO	Internal Training game 45 minutes	<b>Trial Game</b>	<b>Trial Game</b>	<b>Trial Game</b>
Sunday	???	???	???	???	???	???

Working on how conditioning for my team plays how my team plays

Football conditioning focus =  
early in the week

Tactical/Technical focus = later  
in the week

## Fresh for the Game

Weeks 1 & 2 – Big Games

Weeks 3 & 4 – Medium Games

Weeks 5 & 6 - Small Games

# 6 week pre season amateur – Cycle 1



	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Monday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Tuesday	BP 8v8/11v11: step 1 2x10 '/R=2	BPO – BP 8v8/11v11: step 2 2x11 '/R=2	BPO 5v5/7v7 step1 4x4'/R=2'	BP 5v5/7v7 step 2 4.4.5/R=2'	BP 3v3/4v4 step 1 2x6x1'/R=3'	BPO 3v3/4v4 step 2 2x6x1'/R=2.5'
Wednesday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Thursday	BP - BPO	BP	BPO - BP	BP - BPO	BPO	BP
Friday	???	???	???	???	???	???
Saturday	BPO	BP - BPO	Internal Training game 45 minutes	<b>Trial Game</b>	<b>Trial Game</b>	<b>Trial Game</b>
Sunday	???	???	???	???	???	???

Note:

Only one conditioning component should be covered in a single week

Each of the three conditioning components is the focus for two consecutive weeks in the 6-week cycle

Small Increases in the demands  
from week to week and cycle  
to cycle (every 6 weeks  
throughout the season)?



# And that's it!



All the Conditioning exercises you need:

3v3 / 4v4 (the small games)

5v5 / 6v6 / 7v7 (the medium games)

8v8 / 9v9 / 10v10 / 11v11 (the big games)

All **game-specific**— all on the field – all with your team

Don't look at them as Conditioning exercises:

- They are **Football** exercises
- They will assist in the development of your players and the team to play the way you want them to **PLAY**.

**BUT**, THEY HAVE A **CONDITIONING** EMPHASIS!

- The ‘traditional’ model of a ‘punishing’ pre-season to get the players ready, then trying to maintain their fitness for the rest of the season does not work
- The Football Conditioning Model continuously develops players’ fitness step-by-step over the whole season **WITHOUT LOSING VALUABLE TEAM PREPARATION TIME ON NON-RELEVANT ACTIVITIES** (beach runs, mountain bikes, etc.)

## Traditional Method - Quick build-up

Short term fitness

Fitness drops towards the end  
of season

More injuries

Less moments your full squad  
will be on the training pitch

In case of injury: quicker loss of  
fitness

Developing **fatigue**

## Football Conditioning – Gradual build-up

Long term fitness

Fitness increases continually  
during whole season

Less injuries

More moments your full squad  
will be on the training pitch

In case of injury: slower loss of  
fitness

Retaining **freshness**

The concept outlined on this course should give you an idea to use the football conditioning exercises to develop your team in the time you have available!

I want to know more



This is a basic introduction and will improve your team performance.

There is a lot more detail.

To gain a detailed understanding of  
the FFA Football Fitness model?

You need to attend FFA  
Advanced Courses to learn  
about the FFA Football  
Conditioning Model fully



- To introduce the concept that the most appropriate way to train football is to leave the total football structure as much as possible intact.
- To understand how to incorporate Football Fitness into 6-week Technical Tactical cycles

# *Thank you!*

*Better Coaches, Better Football*

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